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ABSTRACT

Focus on Choice was a 309 Special Project with education and research components. The educational aspect involved two pilot classes of under-educated adults in a 13-week course which emphasized self-assessment, goal-setting and occupational information. An integral feature of the design included mutual support groups and role models as a way of encouraging school re-entry and/or an improvement in self-esteem. The most significant impact came from group discussion and contact with peer consultants. The research and project results compiled in this final report indicate that adoption of the Focus on Choice format may be very useful in existing adult education programs. Evaluation was accomplished through questionnaires administered to participants after each session and through informal group and individual discussions with participants outside of the classroom. Evaluations by participants and project staff indicate that the techniques utilized in this project facilitated the adult students' abilities to understand their needs and interests, providing the basis for informed goal setting. A summary of the results show that of the 24 participants, 15 returned to school (63%), and 7 improved their employment status (29%). According to participants' self-inventories administered after the course, their level of self-confidence had greatly improved. (Program materials are appended.) (Author/CT)

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The research and project results compiled in this final report indicate that adaption of the Focus on Choice format may be very useful in existing adult education programs. Evaluations by participants and project staff indicate that the techniques utilized in this project facilitated the adult students' ability to understand their needs and interests, providing the basis for informed goal setting.

A summary of the results show that of the 24 participants, 15 returned to school (63%), and 7 improved their employment status (29%). According to participants' self inventory administered after the course their level of self confidence had greatly improved.

What Focus on Choice was really able to provide, besides the educational emphasis, was a developmental perspective on the value of life elements, all of which involve choices for adults. Participants were able to discover that non-academic and work related skills developed in adulthood do not hinge solely on educational acheivement.

FOCUS ON CHOICE
TABLE OF CONTENTS

		PAGE NO.
I.	INTRODUCTION	1
II.	PROJECT DESIGN	5
	A. Project Staff	5
	B. Consultants	6
	C. Project Setting	10
	D. Schedules	11
	E. Audience	14
	F. Procedures and Activities	22
	1. Recruitment	22
	2. Enrollment	23
	3. Materials	24
	4. Methods	30
	G. Evaluation	40
	H. Comparitive Research	45
III.	RESULTS	49
IV.	CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS	53
	References/Bibliography	58
	Appendices	60

I. INTRODUCTION

Focus on Choice was a dual purpose project. The first goal, which may be viewed as a direct service orientation to participants, was to provide career education and methods of self-assessment for under-educated adults. The objectives which supported this goal are as follows:

1) To recruit and serve two pilot classes of undereducated adults in a 13 week course, scheduled to meet once a week for 3 hour sessions.
2) To implement a curriculum which emphasized self-assessment, goal-setting, decision-making, and values clarification related to the specific needs of an adult in a transitional stage of life.
3) To form and maintain each class within the framework of a mutual support group.
4) To provide role models who were strongly encouraged to relate their personal experiences in the development of their career and educational choices.
5) To facilitate the connection between improvement in participants' self-esteem with their decisions about future educational and employment actions.
6) To provide current information about employment fields.

7) To instruct participants in the mechanics of developing a job campaign.

The second major goal was of a research nature and involved the impact of utilizing the Focus on Choice format in existing systems of adult education. Specific objectives supporting this goal were:

1) To initiate and maintain an ongoing system of gathering and reacting to evaluation data collected from participants and consultants.

2) To compare the results of the project with the results of a similar project geared specifically for those who had attained higher levels of education and/or employment experience.

3) To interpret the objective and subjective changes in the participants' status over the project period.

4) To form concrete suggestions and recommendations regarding the adaptation of Focus on Choice to other programs of adult education.

Focus on Choice was proposed and sponsored by the Fort Wayne Women's Bureau, Inc., a non-profit social service/educational agency. The implementation of the project grew out of the agency's experience in counseling adults, in a stage of transition, whose expressed need was primarily for employment. The Fort Wayne Women's Bureau had compiled data from its' then two year history of infor-

mation, referral and counseling activities. The data indicated that women recognize their need for assistance in identifying employment alternatives. Of the 4,000 individuals requests for assistance in various information areas, approximately one-third of these requests were employment related.

While the research which led to the proposed project was based on the Bureau's experience with women, enrollment in the program was not limited to women.

Jack Mezirow and Amy Rose in An Evaluation Guide for College Women's Re-entry Programs note that women going back to school in unprecedented numbers constitutes one of the most significant movements in higher and adult education in the past decades. "These are women in transition; and they are women with special problems . . . colleges and universities have responded to these special needs of women." (Mezirow, 1978, p. 1) What was unique about Focus on Choice was that the program was adapted to the needs of a specific target group, i.e. those with less than a high school education. One of the immediate needs of this group is acquiring the level of education which society mandates as a minimum for re-entry or up-grading of one's employment status. Their need for improving their self-confidence is intensified by their lack of high school completion.

Given this background, Focus on Choice addressed three basic needs:

1) The need for direct tangible services in the form of current information on educational and employment opportunities available to under-educated adults.
2) The need for intangible support services in order to combat low self-esteem and to facilitate participants' mental and emotional outlook on personal growth and opportunities.
3) The need for an alternative format for adult education programs to assist the re-entry adult student.

II. DESIGN

Focus on Choice was implemented as a small-scale pilot project to test the adaptation of group process in assisting and facilitating the emotional and educational growth of undereducated adults. An ongoing system of evaluative feedback led to continual efforts to refine elements of the curriculum content and techniques to better serve the needs of the participants. This section will describe the project's organizational structure and procedures.

A. Project Staff

There were three staff members, as follows: One director/instructor who was employed half-time; one full-time research coordinator; and one half-time secretary. Appendix A lists the major areas of responsibility for each staff member. As the project was implemented, the director and research coordinator operated as a team with both working to maintain the emphasis on participation by clients in the weekly sessions.

An important consideration regarding staff is that the lack of reliance on the traditional didactic approach and the emphasis on non-academic topics in Focus on Choice facilitated a greater degree of commonality between project staff and participants. The staff participated in the majority of group exercises and group topics on the same level as participants. Of course, the responsibility for facilitating and planning the group activities rested with project staff. However, the atmosphere within the informal classroom was more one of "Let's try this today" than one of "We have something for you to do today." Thus,

the interactive process between staff and participants was a key factor in setting the scene for peer involvement within the group.

An interesting sideline for teaching practitioners in adult education is that the project staff had no formal training in group facilitation. The dynamics which were operative emanated more from the eventual growth of the members within the group than from any one particular professional or non-professional technique utilized by the staff. The participants assisted each other as much as they were assisted by the staff. The topics covered enabled all participants to join in, since they were more of an emotive-attitudinal nature than cognitive. One of the most significant changes many participants reported was their new-found ability to speak up in a group. As a matter of contrast, one of the surprising challenges that developed for the staff was to limit the group discussion so that other activities and tasks could be undertaken.

The important point here is that the project staff implemented a coordinative role, e.g. we enabled the group process to occur, encouraging yet not requiring active involvement by every participant. The staff maintained the program structure and atmosphere, but the real growth was inspired by the participants themselves.

B. Consultants

Other than the 3 staff members, Focus on Choice contracted with guest consultants who were paid a small fee for coming to the class and sharing: 1) their personal experience in education, careers, and, if appropriate, support systems and; 2) their knowledge of a particular

topic relevant to the needs of Focus on Choice participants. Although a list of consultants with their types of contribution is appended, (Appendix B) there were generally 4 types of consultants. The first type emphasized their personal experience in re-entry, particularly re-entry to adult education. The consultants who made the most impact on the participants were those who related similar experiences of struggling with the return to school and/or work and the personal commitment and support systems which enabled them to set goals and achieve a measure of success. Two of the members of the first session were invited back as consultants to the second session. Both had returned to school and recently received their G.E.D.'s They served not only as "consultants" but as excellent role models.

All consultants serve as models but a more important contribution made by those who had followed traditional educational steps was in their emphasis on the universal experiences of clarifying personal needs, integrating one's personal, social, and career life, and reacting, sometimes with weaknesses and self-doubts, but exercizing direction and confidence in the long run. This was an extremely important discovery for the participants which was highlighted over and over by the many guests who sang variations on the theme of adapting to changes in their adult lives.

A second general type of consultant were those whose primary contribution was information. They provided ideas on particular types of jobs/careers, how they got interested in the field, what they do on their jobs, and what they knew about opportunities in their area.

Examples include an educational adminstrator, a health field counselor, a data processor, an insurance salesperson, a machine rewinder, a bail commissioner, a CETA counselor, a woman's advocate coordinator, and a child care worker. Efforts were made to invite persons employed in non-traditional job areas as well as traditional careers to broaden the perspective of participants and to stimulate their consideration of a wider range of employment alternatives.

Persons employed in the helping and personnel professions were in the third general category of consultants. An experienced assertiveness trainer, a career development counselor, a personnel director from a large government organization, and a vocational testing specialist applied their particular skills in the following manners. The assertiveness trainer conducted 2 sessions within each 13 week course. After explaining the concept of assertiveness, the participants were involved in role-playing situations from their daily lives in which they were having difficulty articulating and expressing their points of view.

The career development counselor conducted a 3 hour session with each class on the value and the method of developing a resume. The class together filled out a sample application form and developed a sample resume. The consultant, attuned to the status of the participants- the majority of whom had minimal job experience outside the home, offered practical advice by suggesting methods of applying the skills and experience developed in the home or volunteer areas to their resume. A resume developed by one participant is included as Appendix D.

The personnel director, building on the skills identification and resume session, offered the perspective of what an employer looks for in the interview session. For those participants who so elected, mock interviews were conducted in the classroom with immediate feedback offered by the group. Clarity of purpose, interest in a position, body language, references, and followup were stressed.

Although the vocational and aptitude testing was not conducted in the first course, participants in the second class were very interested in the opportunity. Thus, the staff contracted to offer such testing in the spring. A battery of interest and ability tests was administered by a consultant who also met individually with each participant to interpret the results. Special care was taken to remind participants that the tests are only tools and should not be entirely relied upon as sacred indicators of success or failure in a particular area. Again, knowledge of one's values, interests, and abilities discovered by a personal search was given priority over reliance on test data.

The last general type of consultant was one who could offer alternative ways of handling stress. Interestingly, this was not originally planned, but in listening to the concerns of participants as they talked of painful episodes and lack of support within their family or social environments, project staff brought in two people who were able to involve participants in art activities from the perspective of expressing one's feelings on a non-rational level. One consultant, experienced in utilizing visual art therapy, involved the class in 2 pro-

jects - creating a life collage and "Finding One's Way With Clay." The other, who teaches body movement and T'ai Chi, simply took the class through a series of breathing exercizes and muscle relaxation techniques. The overall time commitment to these activities was not great but sparked a beneficial connection with many of the participants. Two other side effects were the discoveries made by many participants that they were perhaps more artistically talented than the project staff and, the comforting acknowledgement that we, as adults, need a variety of ways to cope with stress regardless of education or employment level.

C. Project Setting

As with many adult education programs which do not operate in a regular classroom setting, Focus on Choice was specifically designed to be run in an informal atmosphere. An educational building owned and operated by a church and located in the downtown area of the city was the site for the classes. The location was chosen not only for its availability but also because it was accessible to bus routes and was only a few blocks away from the adult education center. Many of the participants later arranged their schedule to attend Focus on Choice in the morning, break for lunch, and then go to the Learning Center in the afternoon. The major complaint, as with any downtown facility, was parking spaces for those who drove.

The church regularly makes space available at no charge to community groups. A room large enough for 20-25 adults and equipped with tables and chairs was available to the project for one day a week over the duration of both 13 week courses. The church also rented the use of a

16mm film projector for a minimal fee.

The class members, staff and any guests were seated in a round-table fashion. This was by design and facilitated the creation of an informal atmosphere. After a couple of sessions, each person found her "spot." Since many of the participants had been away from a school room for a long period time, the roundtable setting also helped to overcome rememberances of anxiety in a structured environment from childhood school years. As they learned about the local adult education learning center's open environment, their experience in Focus was an additional transition tool in becoming accustomed to a non-traditional learning environment. An addition to the second session offerings was a coffee and tea table, supported by users' contributions. It made a small but helpful addition to maintaining group cohesiveness. The project staff were, in fact always repremanded when it was not there and participants frequently contributed snacks.

D. Schedules

1. Individual classes

Except for special sessions, each 3-hour class was roughly divided into the following time periods.

9:00 - 9:15 a.m.	Followup on new events, either by participants or news of community events.
9:15 - 10:30 a.m.	Work in text or group exercise/discussion.
10:30 - 10:40 a.m.	Break and stretch.

10:40 - 11:00 a.m.	Followup and summary of topic with introduction of guest consultant or film.
11:00 - 11:50 a.m.	Consultant/film, group discussion.
11:50 - 12:00 p.m.	Evaluation form and introduction of following week's activities/assignments.

On paper the above schedule appears tight and structured. In operation, a much greater degree of flexibility occured as group discussion ebbed and flowed, films did not always arrive on scheduled dates, and consultants' schedules did not always blend with our fine, orderly sequence of topics. Our initial reaction of frustration grew into one of adjustment. It taught us that the participants were not nearly as anxious about meeting project structure objectives as we were, and in fact were benefitting from what was offered more than from when it was offered. The necessity for flexibility and directing some of the sessions toward the immediate concerns of the participants was appropriate to the experimental nature of the project and served the intent to form a supportive bond. This quality of flexibility was an important ingredient in the group work focusing on the personal contributions of individual members.

2. Course

Two 13-week courses were conducted during the project period.

Both were planned to be coordinated as closely as possible with the semesters of the local school system. The fall course ran from September 14, 1977 through December 7, 1977. The spring course ran from January 25, 1978 through May 3, 1978 - two weeks longer than originally planned due to the wishes of both staff and participants to spend additional time on vocational counseling and a topic in the text on risk raking. Furthermore, the unusually severe winter weather was responsible for class cancellation on two occasions; once in the fall course and once in the spring. The classes were held on Wednesday mornings for 3 hours each. This time frame worked out best for those who did not work a day shift or did not work at all. A more convenient adaptation would be to offer a day class and an evening class to accommodate those employed on a full-time basis. A few participants who secured full-time day employment were forced to drop out of Focus. Although the employment securement was considered as a successful result, the participants regretted not being able to participate in the rest of the sessions.

3. Project

Focus on Choice was a year-long project, beginning July 1, 1977 and ending June 30, 1978. The time commitment for major project activities was as follows: 1 month - project initiation, staff hiring and training, office organization; 1 month - participant recruitment, purchase of instructional materials, guest consultants contracts initiated, evaluation methods outlined; 3½ months - 1st 13-week course conducted; 1½ months - recruitment, evaluations from 1st course considered

in altering 2nd course; 3½ months - 2nd 13-week course conducted; ½ months - summary evaluation; 1 month - development of report for dissemination of project results.

E. AUDIENCE

In proposing to sponsor and implement Focus on Choice, the Fort Wayne Women's Bureau was predisposed to serve the special needs of women. The agency's experience in job and personal counseling provided an informational base upon which the definition of the needs were articulated and clarified. There was and continues to be a definite link between the environmental factors and personal factors which indicate a disparity of educational and employment status between men and women.

Practitioners in adult and continuing education have begun to take into account the results of research on the psychosocial differences in adult development and learning. This developmental perspective as contrasted with a traditional static approach of viewing adults as having completed their "choices" by young adulthood has instigated a wave of new programs for adults in transition. A great deal of the activity is occuring on college campuses in the continuing education division which has witnessed a massive return of adult women to formal education. A burgeoning number of "women's" programs have sprung up on such campuses to meet the needs of the woman whose roles as home-maker, worker and/or student are undergoing rapid changes which influence the successful fullfillment of the roles. (Mezirow, 1978, p. 1) (Knox, 1977, pp. 403-512, "Women's Roles").

One need not look too far or too hard to discover that many of the programs contain similar elements of a mutual support group, exercises in goal-setting, values clarification, skills assessment, and career education techniques. ("Selected List of Post Secondary Education Opportunities for Minorities and Women," HEW, OE, 1977) ("First Annual Report," Women's Education Equity Act, HEW, OE, September 30, 1976.) These programs have been targeted for women resuming their formal education at the post secondary level. And therein lies the primary distinction between Focus on Choice and the multitude of re-entry programs designed for women.

We recognized that adult women with less than high school education have the same basic needs on a psychological and practical level as do the college re-entry women. An underlying assumption was that the educationally disadvantaged group had a greater need for specialized program than those who have articulated their needs on a more intellectual level. Furthermore, the re-entry into adult basic, adult secondary, or G.E.D. preparation demanded a greater degree of personal courage. The step back for under-educated adults, regardless of sex, is often clouded with negative past experiences in the learning environment For many, their self-images, closely tied as they are with their social context and role expectations, had suffered a setback as one of our society's prize values - education - had grown in esteem. The transitional steps back to the classroom and/or job through Focus on Choice was designed as a means to serve this special target group and to test the relevance of a successful concept with a different population. Thus,

the audience we had in mind were adult women who would benefit by and take advantage of the methods and materials selected by the project staff.

An additional consideration in this discussion on audience is that although the program was planned for educationally disadvantaged women, there was no conscious attempt on the part of the sponsor or funding source to exclude the participation of educationally disadvantaged men. The types of methods and similar materials are viewed to be equally adaptable to a sexually mixed group of adults who share the experience of role transition/expansion. Human developmental theory suggests that adults adapting to change benefit by group acknowledgement and support of newly acquired self-images inspired by the change process. (Knox, 1977 pp. 513-550). It is hoped that the true strength of the project's impact will be felt by the entire system of adult education, not just the target group of women.

Within the current student accounting system in Indiana's Division of Adult Education there are distinctions made on the basis of reading ability to classify students in Adult Basic and Adult Secondary. Focus on Choice did not attempt to recruit students from any particular ability level. Nor were there any eligibility requirements based on socioeconomic status. The only criterion adhered to was that all participants had achieved less than a high school education or its equivalency. Some of the participants had never been back to school since dropping out; some had returned to adult education and dropped out of that program; and some were currently enrolled in the community school adult program as well as enrolled in Focus On Choice. The

participants were charged no fees and were also provided with the materials used in the program.

Following is a detailed display of the Focus on Choice class profiles. The proposed objective was to serve 35-50 adults. "Core" refers to those who attended at least 4 sessions and contributed to the class process. "Registrants" refers to those who initially came, attended less than 4 times and did not return. Members who did not attend the full sequence of classes but exhibited signs of having benefitted by participation either by a return to school or work were also classified as core group.

FOCUS ON CHOICE
CLASS PROFILES

	FALL SESSION				SPRING SESSION				CUMULATIVE			
	CORE		REGISTRANT		CORE		REGISTRANT		CORE		REGISTRANT	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
A. TOTAL	9		19		15		18		24		37	
B. Demographic Status:												
1. Age:												
a. average	40		40		40		37		40		38.5	
b. range	27-58		26-65		19-57		18-59		19-58		18-65	
2. Sex												
a. female	9	100	19	100	15	100	18	100	24	100	37	100
3. Minority Culture:												
a. Black			5		1		2		1		7	
b. Spanish-Speaking	1		2				1		1		3	
c. English as 2nd lang.	1		1		2		2		3		3	
TOTAL	2	22	8	42	3	20	5	27	5	14	13	35
4. Marital Status:												
a. Married	6	67	12	63	10	67	11	61	16	67	23	62
b. Divorced	2	22	4	21	2	13	4	22	4	17	8	22
c. Separated			1	5	2	13	2	11	2	8	3	8
d. Widow	1	11	1	5					1	4	1	3
e. Single			1	5	1	7	1	6	1	4	2	5
5. No. of Children	27		60		45		49		72		109	
ave. per person	3		3.2		3		2.6		3		3	
6. Income												
a. ave. range	$5-10,000				$5-10,000				$5-10,000			
b. distribution												
$5,000	1		6		3		5		4		11	
$ 5-10,000	4		6		4		5		8		11	
$10-15,000	2		5		6		6		8		11	
$15-20,000	1		1		2		2		3		3	
$20,000	1		1		0		0		1		1	
C. Education												
1. Grade Level Attainment												
a. Mean	9		9.3		9.3		9.4		9.2		9.4	
b. Mode	9		9		10		10.5		9.5		9.8	
2. No. years away from school												
a. Ave. No.	25yrs		25yrs		20yrs		17.4yrs		22.5yrs		21.2yrs	
b. Range	11-43yrs		9-49yrs		0-42yrs		0-42yrs		0-43yrs		0-49yrs	
D. Employment												
1. Employed	3	33	4	20	2	13	3	17	5	20	7	19
2. Unemployed	6	67	15	80	13	87	15	83	19	80	30	81

Rather than viewing the variances in members' progress and change as detrimental to the group process as was initially done by project staff, we discovered that it was readily adaptable to the format. Again, our proposed goal of having everyone who signed up attend every session soon proved to be unrealistic and imposed an unnecessary rigidity into the curriculum. Fortunately, the insights offered by the participants, who actually were far better equipped to tell us how much exposure they needed rather than vice versa, led us to assume more realistic expectations.

Those who registered and did not return or attended only once or twice constitute Focus's drop-outs. Although followup contacts were made with some of them, no concrete reasons relating to the program format were offered. The major reasons offered by those who dropped out related to problems of ill health, lack of time to organize family responsibilities, and/or assumption of employment. It is assumed by the staff that somehow the link was not made with these adults due either to fear of group interaction or the person was not in need of the transition process but instead wanted to concentrate on academic areas or immediate employment.

The geographic characteristics of the participants would be characterized as urban on a general basis. However, 2 of the participants lived outside the city in small towns, 2 lived on the outskirts of Fort Wayne, and 2 of the older women were strongly influenced by a rural youth and childhood.

The group of women who were served in Focus were not characterized by a great degree of similarity in age, income, family status, or educational background. Although the average grade level of attainment was 9th grade, the range was from 5th grade to 11th grade. Some were good readers, some were average, and one participant was a non-reader who was assisted by her husband in processing the written material. The diversity in the group turned out to be beneficial. They assisted each other, contributing to the goal of formation of a support system.

Their average number of children - 3 per participant - was higher than the national average. Those with large families with many young children obviously found it more difficult to incur the additional demands of returning to school. The "typical" participant, however, was a woman whose children were grown and on the verge of achieving their own independence. Without question, such women were at the life stage of reassigning time and role priorities due to the change in their parenting roles. The change acted as a stimulus for them to move toward action to meet their needs in re-definition of self. Return to school/work were the decisions confronting them.

With those that did return to school while simultaneously attending Focus on Choice, an interesting phenomenon occured. Their view of themselves in starting Focus and school was as a housewife also taking a class or two. As the seriousness increased and G.E.D. goals were set, there was a shift toward considering themselves as students with additional responsibilities in the home and/or community.

Three of the participants used English as a second language. Two were from Germany and one was French Canadian. They experienced cultural changes in their adulthood and found it to be a very difficult barrier to overcome in their re-entry process. Skills learned in their native land did not transfer readily to American standards i.e. basic things like measurements or even typing skills.

A final consideration on audience for those perhaps interested in adapting the format is that not all students in adult education should be considered potential participants. While it is probably true that the majority of them are undergoing some form of transition, it is also true that not all persons benefit from the process of group dynamics and informal personal exchange. Some adults, upon re-entry, have already developed either an internal or external support system where their goals and values have been affirmed and validated. Focus on Choice is really for those who need a testing ground for growth and can profit from the comparison and contrast of others' experiences and plans with their own.

F. PROCEDURES AND ACTIVITIES

This section of the report will describe the activities conducted in preparation for the classes, what materials were used, how the materials were presented in the sessions, and the evaluation methods.

1. Recruitment

Considerable effort was directed at reaching participants who we thought would be most likely to benefit from access to an introduction to educational and employment opportunities. Several methods were utilized to attract the target population. The first was preparation, printing, and distribution of a program brochure. The brochure highlighted the major activities that would be conducted in the session and provided information on how, when, & where to register. Copies of the brochure were personally distributed to all of the major service agencies in town and to the local adult educational program by project staff who also met with agency representatives to explain the program in detail. Referrals from the representatives were solicited, and an introductory letter with a brochure was mailed out to potential participants referred by the agencies. A different brochure was developed for recruiting the second class. Feedback from program supporters had indicated that the first brochure failed to create a positive impression due to its' hand-made quality and lack of color. The second brochure seemed to be more visually appealing and was printed by a professional printer. See Appendix E.

Utilization of the news media was the most successful recruitment technique. Public service announcements were distributed to all area newspapers, T.V. and radio stations. Feature articles on the project

were run by a local newspaper, television and radio talk shows were scheduled to publicize the program. In the first class, the majority of participants responded to the news articles. In the second class the noon T.V. talk shows were responsible for attracting most of the participants. Copies of the news articles are attached as Appendix F.

On an overall basis sixty-three persons phoned the Bureau to inquire about the program which was publicized. Many were more interested in the academic program already available through Fort Wayne Community Schools and were directed to the program by project staff. Some expressed a minimal interest in Focus as it was explained and seemed to be hesitant in becoming involved with a group. Explaining Focus as a way of joining with others, who had been away from school for a long period of time and who were experiencing similar doubts of self-confidence, seemed to bring out a familiar emotion and proved to be a positive drawing technique for those who eventually became the core classes.

2. Enrollment

In the 1st semester, a 2 day registration was held a week before the 1st class. This did not work out well since the filling out of individual registration and reading forms was a frightening and impersonal way to start out a group - based experience. During the second semester, we combined the registration process with the 1st 3-hour class and used the time to introduce the curriculum and methods. This was much more in line with the intent to put the participants at ease and to give a clear view of what they would be doing during successive sessions.

An information packet was the 1st material distributed. It contained handouts and brochures on interviewing tips, listening skills, group discussion guide, money management, Adult Education schedule from Fort Wayne Community School System, Fort Wayne Women's Bureau information, and how to contact project staff.

3. Materials

a. Texts

The material which was the backbone of the curriculum was a workbook entitled, How to Decide: A Guide For Women. As suggested in the book's foreword, it is a book,

> "designed to meet the changing needs of women by increasing their decision-making ability and by helping them apply the dynamics of decision-making to planning their lives in a world of broadening and different opportunities and expectations."
> (Scholz, Prince, Miller, 1975)

It was proposed to be used in either individual or group settings and was suggested as appropriate for women of all ages, from college through retirement. The use of the text for those with less than a high school education was an adaptation which became a unique feature of the Focus on Choice format. Although the presumed reading audience was college level and up, the reading level of the text was such that a person with a 6th grade level of comprehension could use it effectively. The majority of Focus' participants had achieved that level as indicated by their performance on the Botel Word Opposite Test

administered during registration. For the few with lower reading ability, the experience of reading out loud in class enabled them to complete the workbook activities along with everyone else.

The text contains the major areas of concern that we also sought to emphasize in the curriculum - e.g. values clarification, self-assessment goal-setting, and steps in decision-making. As a book meant to be written in, it has an abundance of exercizes designed to motivate the user to interact with the material. The samples and role models are also ones with which any adult could easily relate.

The 1st part of the text, which we began using in the very first session of the course, was perhaps the most difficult in terms of challenge. The 1st group exercise used was the development of a lifeline which displays one's past, present, and future highpoints and lowpoints. This proved to be an immediate stimulus for group discussion since for many participants the question of a lifetime perspective on all events had not been raised since adolescence. To display one's life on paper - even in code - was a beginning step in learning how the events which occured were influenced by others' decisions or by one's own decisions. The focus was on the importance of actively participating in any future important events and recognizing the degree to which personal responsibility or lack thereof had shaped past events. This process was anxiety - producing for all participants and no effort was made to diminish the seriousness of the task. Completing the exercise in class and hearing others talk of their life experiences helped to create an awareness that

it was a difficult thing for everyone to do. However, the lesson was an important one in view of personal, career, and education decisions yet to be made.

At no time in Focus were participants required to share any information with the group. Such sharing was always voluntary. Working in How to Decide was a tool in helping them (and us) to discover and clarify personal matters, so they were reminded to write their responses in the book with no audience in mind but themselves. Another suggestion was to write in pencil since the book's exercises could be used over and over again with varying responses. This latter thought was initially upsetting to some participants. They wanted their answers to last forever, thinking that one's values, goals, and decisions "should" be permanent. The simple example of comparing one's goals of five years ago with those of the present quickly suggested the unlikely and unnecessary nature of viewing goals in an absolute manner.

Another interesting reaction by a few of the participants was their uneasiness with the consideration of alternatives - one of the steps in decision-making. Their definition of "alternative" was the least desirable approach - or what will occur if one doesn't do what is expected. It was a surprise for them to learn that "alternative" has no automatic implications of negative value but is simply a different approach or solution which has different outcomes in the process of setting goals and taking action.

The book was extremely beneficial and effective in both classes. We did not reach the ambitious curriculum goal of completing the text. Even if we had utilized only the How to Decide text and nothing else, it is

still doubtful if the thirty-nine hours would have been sufficient to adequately deal with all the processing that the book can generate in a group setting. We hit the major sections in the book and set aside time to read, write, and react during the class sessions. A few participants were intrigued enough to complete the text on their own and went back to it several times. One woman even began holding family "group" sessions with her teenaged children, discussing some of the exercises in the book. Because of the personal growth and group bonding that the text stimulated, it was highly rated by participants, staff, and consultants.

Many new texts are being developed in the career education field which offer similar exercises and insights. Because we served a group of adult women, we used one particularly geared to them. However, for those wishing to create a similar format, two other texts have been used for adult groups with equally effective results - Threads: A Tapestry Of Self and Career Exploration, Barkhaus and Bolyard, 1977; and What Color Is Your Parachute? Bolles, 1977.

In Focus on Choice, two other texts were provided to participants. Both related directly to seeking, acquiring, and maintaining employment. They were: 1) The Quick Job Hunting Map, Bolles and Zenoff, 1977 and 2) Womans Work Book, Abarbanel and Siegel, 1975. These were used as supplemental material - reinforcing what was discussed in class and providing additional exercises and information.

b. Films

The second major type of instructional material utilized in the course was films. All films were selected on the basis of relevance to the participants on either a cultural or an emotional level. Some were chosen because

they portrayed women in non-traditional occupations - supporting the concept of emerging options and alternatives in the selection of a career. Although we had originally hoped for a showing of the films as they related to the topics of the session, the availability of the films on a rental basis came to be a more important consideration than it's timeliness with the curriculum. A list of films and their sources are in Appendix G.

In descending order of impact, the films were as follows:

1. "Back to School, Back to Work" - a stimulus film in which actors/actresses faced the viewing audience and presented typical responses which a woman hears from friends, family, and employers after making the decision to re-enter school or upgrade her employment status. The film is designed to be stopped after each "confrontation" so that immediate reactions of the group members can be processed. This experience was again more than a bit anxiety producing, but allowed the participants to develop a means of dealing with the doubts and guilt which others' expectations of one's role can produce. 20 min.
2. "Why Not a Woman?" - a film portraying women in the skilled trades with accompanying interviews of the women workers and employers suggesting that application of skills to new jobs is a real possibility. This helped participants to clarify their own attitudes about non-traditional jobs for themselves and their children. 25 min.
3. "Men's Lives" - a documentary on the socialization process experienced by men who are overtly and covertly encouraged to become extremely responsible for their own future plans at a very young age. Little boys test out career ideas, while little girls assume a homemaking

role. It was conducive to reflecting on child rearing patterns which the participants were exposed to and which is still prevalent in American society. 43 min.

4. "Growing Up Female" - a comparison to the above film. This one develops the traditional socialization experience of women who are taught to rely on others for their definition and fuifillment of survival and are sometimes rudely awakened to the need to take care of themselves in adulthood. This film portrayed many familiar roles to Focus participants who were able to laugh at the common misconceptions delivered by some of the young women in the film who were presenting ideas on what their future lives would probably contain. 50 min.
5. "Joyce at 34" - view of a married woman who, after having her first child, realizes the conflict between fulfilling the dual roles of mother and worker. This was a timely film in view of the role transition many of the participants were undergoing. 25 min.
6. "Rollover" - a short film, also portraying women in non-traditional occupations. Includes scene of family breakfast with husband preparing the meal and taking care of numerous children while the wife reads the newspaper at the table. This was not only comical but insightful in it's implication that role expectations are strongly reinforced in the home as well as at work. 10 min.

All of the films were used as a discussion starter. As such, they helped to round out the treatment of the topics, primarily those dealing with the need to continually reassess one's role in major life activities and decisions within the context of social and cultural change.

c. Handouts

Other than the initial collection of information handed out, the entire sequence of classes was supplemented with handouts which either highlighted a concept from the text or advertised an event or service of interest to the participants. Samples of some of the more important handouts are included in Appendix H.

Also provided as a supplemental tool for job investigation, was a series of laminated job charts which displayed typical salary levels, levels of education required, and forecasted demand for selected positions. Although the impact was not great, the charts did generate some interest in discovering more about particular job areas and considering a wider range of employment options.

4. Methods

The methods utilized in Focus on Choice are easily implemented within the group setting. The major types of methods used included peer guest consultants, heavy utilization of group discussion, and role-playing. Also used were occupational investigation exercises through which individual members researched one position they had always been interested in but had never pursued. They interviewed a person currently employed in the position to find out qualifications, activities, benefits and liabilities associated with the position. Then a report was made to the class on their findings. This was an exciting activity for those who did it since they were able to discover some first hand information about whether they could seriously see themselves in the position. A secondary discovery was a method to job hunt which is non-threatening since the participants were the interviewers. It is an effective method to gradually become accustomed to the interview situation. One participant who had initially expressed considerable anxiety

about the activity decided to go ahead and do it and was subsequently offered employment by the person she interviewed. Others discovered that their fantasies of the "perfect position" were simply that - fantasies - and that some negative qualities or responsibilities are associated with almost any position.

The curriculum guide which helped us to plan discussion topics, appropriate consultants, films, and exercises also provided a great degree of flexibility in applying methods to generate involvement by individual members. The topic outline conformed closely with the subjects covered in the workbook. It is included as follows:

COURSE OUTLINE

Topic	Session I
WHERE ARE YOU AS A WOMAN?	Registration. Introduction of staff, group members, and course objectives with explanation of major projects and materials to be used. Examination of attitudes toward oneself and toward other women. The effect general attitudes, experiences and values have on us and the decisions we make.
	Session II
WHO ARE YOU?	Examination of personal values, abilities, interests and special talents toward a better self understanding. Ranking values and relating them to work.
	Session III
WHAT YOU NEED BEFORE YOU GO JOB HUNTING	Focus on setting realistic and meaningful goals based upon an understanding of self, including values, interests, skills, strengths and weaknesses. Dialogue with community women from various occupational fields about the career opportunities there.

Session IV

DECISION MAKING: INFORMATION IS POWER

How to determine what information is needed to make decisions, how to get at this information and utilize it effectively and what to do if the necessary information is not available.

Session V

THE HIDDEN JOB MARKET

Examination of the "old girls" network of possible job leads such as the Women's Bureau, women helping women, plus the normal channels of newspaper ads, employment agencies, government, etc. Also the alternative of seeking non-traditional jobs or job creation.

Session VI

KNOWING YOUR JOB RIGHTS

Examine the laws which affect women in the labor market, including Affirmative Action, equal employment laws, legislation pertinent to Indiana and procedures for filing a discrimination complaint.

Session VII & VIII

ASSERTIVENESS AS A STRATEGY

Through role playing and participants' examples, assertive behavior will be practiced through actual experience and examined as a powerful life strategy.

Session IX

RESUME WRITING

Using a workshop approach to this paper and pencil session on writing and critiquing each others resume to learn how to write a successful resume.

Session X

THE INTERVIEW

Role playing technique with class members participating in job interviews. Group process to critique those interviewed.

Session XI

TAKING THE JOB	Taking a hard look at what is realistic to expect from a job offer and what is necessary to discuss with a prospective employer regarding benefits, growth potential and salary; will include an examination of "who pays what to whom".

Session XII & XIII

WHERE DO YOU GO FROM HERE: EVALUATION SESSION	Through questionnaires and group discussion, the project will be evaluated, with prospects of continuing on an unstructured basis for purposes of mutual support.

As a means of demonstrating how the above guide was implemented, the following chart displays the actual topics and methods which were included in the second series of sessions.

Curriculum as Implemented - Detail of Second 13-Week Course

SESSION I	CONTENT	METHODS
14 present	Introduction. Registration. Explanation of program goals and format.	Congratulating group for enrolling and taking the first step toward serious consideration of their goals Began work in text, divided into two small groups for discussion. Distributed registration forms.

COMMENTS: A participant raised the question of why others had dropped out of school. We went around the group and everyone talked about why they had either "chosen" or "had" to leave school.
Atmosphere: Structured but friendly, reluctance to participate freely. Women were interested in meeting each other.

SESSION II	CONTENT	METHODS
12 present Consultants: Richard Deputy Raymond Quance Mary Jackson Evelyn Teel	Values Clarification. Introduction to G.E.D. preparation program and other classes.	Worked in workbook with group discussion. Field trip to Fort Wayne Community School Learning Center. Presentations by peer and information consultants.

COMMENTS: Mary Jackson and Evelyn Teel related personal experiences in returning to adult education. They set the tone with "If I can do it, so can you."
Atmosphere: Women were impressed and inspired by consultants. Meeting with adult education representatives helped allay fears of difficulty of returning.

SESSION III	CONTENT	METHODS
12 present Consultants: Ranny Levy Mary Ann White	Initial occupational goal-setting. Dealing with stress which accompanies major decisions affecting daily routine	Two films: 1) "Back to work", 2) "Why Not A Woman?" Group discussion with consultants. Directed activity by consultant.

COMMENTS: One of the participants talked about how life had passed her by. We tried to counter wit- a positive approach to the future. Ranny lead the group in relaxation exercises.
Atmosphere: The film generated a great deal of discussion. Almost everyone identified with feelings stimulated in the film. Strength was gained by having to confront the situations portrayed. Women responded very positively to relaxation exercises.

SESSION IV	CONTENT	METHODS
10 present Consultants: Sally O'Kane Anne Mettler Rikki Goldstein Kathy Weiss Dick Smith	Hidden Job Market Selecting alternatives. Non-traditional jobs. "Old Girl Network" CETA opportunities	Worked in workbook Discussion. A game: What's My Line? with four consultants. Film: "Men's Lives".

COMMENTS: Initially, participants were unable to see the relationship between their life experience as homemakers and employment related skills and then translating them into employment vocabulary. Movie, "Men's Lives" showed how males are socialized at an early age to be responsible for their future, an experience our participants did not have in childhood.
Atmosphere: By the end of the session, the group members were comfortable asking questions and sharing information, yet they were still hesitant in connecting the value of their own experience with the values and experiences which society equates with success.

SESSION V	CONTENT	METHODS
11 present Consultants: Karen Bojrab Judy Hollander Judy Oliver	Values Clarification. Identification of barriers to goal setting, external and internal.	Games: Values Auction, an emotional approach to prioritizing. Worked in workbook. Discussion. Introduced Assertiveness Training and assigned reading. Presented Occupational investigation as individual projects.

COMMENTS: Many testimonials in class of the value of Focus for reinforcing their sense of self. Judy Oliver talked about her battle with herself in accepting the fact that getting the G.E.D. was very important for her. Some participants identified their goal to obtain the G.E.D. but felt they were not ready to begin an occupational investigation. We encouraged them to do so anyway as an informal way to prepare for job-hunting.
Atmosphere: Positive reinforcement resulting from participation in values auction. The group exchange was beginning to be built on the members' familiarity with each other's lives and situations.

SESSION VI	CONTENT	METHODS
6 present Consultant: Carol Durham	Assertiveness as a strategy	Film, "Joyce at 34" Explanation of assertiveness. Role playing situations from participants' lives with attempts to replay the event with assertive behavior.

COMMENTS: One participant spoke of her lack of support at home; her history of therapy, not being able to take her own needs seriously. Another woman expressed difficulty in viewing herself as being valuable for her husband, based upon her lack of education. Consultant dealt with first woman's insecurity by having her announce to the group. . . "I am somebody." This exercise initiated the process of taking one's self and one's needs seriously. Film generated discussion of child birth, how they had their kids and the role their husbands played in helping them.
Atmosphere: The group members were captivated by the opportunity to replicate situations in their lives over which they could exert a greater degree of control. They were also very moved by the "I AM SOMEBODY" activity. The reality of this expression moved one woman to tears with others in the group responding sympathetically.

SESSION VII	CONTENT	METHODS
10 present Consultant: Carol Durham	Assertiveness as a strategy (con't)	Film, "Growing up Female" Assertiveness role playing.

COMMENTS: Processed the impact of the exercise including "I am somebody." Long discussion on foolish behavior versus risk-taking and trust. Lot of discussion about film - they identified with the philosophy of women playing the role of husband-supporter. Participants' comments: "Evidently, we all agreed with that or else why would we have done it - because everyone else was doing it?" "I felt that way for the 1st 15 years of my marriage - but now it's not enough." "I now know that getting my G.E.D. may not be important to anyone else in my family, but it is importat to me."
Atmosphere: Open sharing. Because of role playing they were able to interact with each other. They talked about these interactions and others' behavior as well as their need to obtain some form of approval for going back to school and that Focus was serving that function.

SESSION VIII	CONTENT	METHODS
6 present Consultants: Robert Leeper Betty Lou Nault	G.E.D. program at IVY Tech, Facilities at IVY Tech	Field trip to IVY Tech Film: "Roll Over"

COMMENTS: Class explained to Mr. Leeper the value and the role of Focus in their lives. Participants noted the lack of women in the welding classes, motor repair classes, etc. This exposure to IVY Tech's program allowed participants to begin comparison with the community school's program. The film showed women in non-traditional roles and generated discussion on how participants children would be more prepared to assume those roles.
Atmosphere: Information-gathering, curiosity, more structured due to unfamiliar setting. Participants expressed interest in some of the business and health programs offered at IVY Tech.

SESSION IX	CONTENT	METHODS
6 class members 2 guests from 1st class Consultant : Florence Smith	Resume writing	Pencil and paper workshop, each participant developed her own resume.

COMMENTS: Each person had to share verbally what she had done in employment and education. One participant expressed concern because she had not worked since she had married. A new participant talked about the need for open discussion with older persons returning to school. We arranged for her to meet with one of the participants from the first class to assist her. Another past participant reported that she is home repairing T.V.'s in her home. Florence helped them to recognize that their home making skills can be transferred to employment skills, provided they are defined in ways which employers can see as useful. She also emphasized the importance of setting a job or career goal and including that on one's resume.
Atmosphere: Participants were better able to identify their skills because they had to write them down. They began to view their employment goals in relation to education goals.

SESSION X	CONTENT	METHODS
2 present	Examination of how the expectations of others'	Open disucssion, Worked in Workbook.
Consultants: Pat Kern Rivkah Sweedler	can affect one's events and decisions.	

COMMENTS: This session was during spring vacation for Fort Wayne Communit-School and many class members assumed we were also on break. Consultants spoke about their own life experiences. There were contrasts in the particular events which occurred in their lives; however, there were similarities in that they had not taken responsibility for 2 major decisions that affected their lives, i.e. marriage and education.
Atmosphere: Relaxed, opportunity for individual dialogue and counseling.

SESSION XI	CONTENT	METHODS
7 present	Legal Rights Interviewing Skills	Work in workbook consultant presentations. Role playing interviews.
Consultants: Janet Mitchell Julie Sillaway		

COMMENTS: Information offered by Janet was useful to participants in determining what is legal and illegal and what options are available. Julie provided mock interview experiences which benefited not only the class members participating but those observing. Everyone had the opportunity to witness what actually occurs in an interview. One class member said, "I need the constant contact with this class to keep up my enthusiasm."

Atmosphere: Learning situation provoked positive tension, and some anxiety regarding future actions.

SESSION XII	CONTENT	METHODS
6 present Consultant: Kathy Mettler	Occupational Investigations, Vocational Aptitude Testing	Class reports Battery of tests

COMMENTS: One participant was offered a job at the site she chose to do her occupational investigation. Another reported applying for a position at International Harvester. By this time in the sequence, eight participants of the core class had returned to school and one was employed full-time and one part-time.
Atmosphere: Anxiety because of testing situation despite efforts to diffuse tension. Also profound interest.

SESSION XIII	CONTENT	METHODS
3 present No Consultant	Developing Alternatives. Risk-Taking	Work in workbook Discussion

COMMENTS: Women attending talked about continuing Focus both for themselves and a new class. They examined their ability to adjust to the uneven attendance pattern exhibited by the class. Questioned the limitation to persons without high school completion. Talked about friends they had who did not qualify but would benefit from Focus.
Atmosphere: Relaxed, sense of accomplishment from having worked in workbook. Women projected need to go back to the book and suggested that they intended to use it over and over in the future. They expressed anxiety about ending Focus.

SESSION XIV	CONTENT	METHODS
6 present Consultant: Kathy Mettler	Interpretation of test results. Evaluation of Focus	Exercises in workbook Explanation of test with the group. Interpretation of results with individual consultations.

COMMENTS: Consultant provided job counseling as well as test score interpretations. Emphasis on using the test information as an indication to tested interest, reflecting how participant felt the day of the test. She cautioned them not to put too much reliance on the results but to view it as part of a total picture. Information validated for several participants their personal knowledge and abilities. Final evaluation forms were filled out.
Atmosphere: There was a expressed reluctance to have the sessions come to an end, plus a sense of accomplishment for having participated and contributed. Certificates were handed out to each participant. The verbal and written evaluations was extremely positive.

After the first few sessions the participants became accustomed to the format and were much more willing to participate in discussion. This was true for both groups. The momentum seemed to grow out of encouragement by project staff in the first few sessions and a need by participants to talk. The process of personal growth commented upon often by many of the participants engendered a sense of trust that also was significant in setting a tone for involvement and respect.

At times the topics under consideration were not of an immediate concern to participants. Many had not yet focused clearly on particular job goals. Yet the information offered and the process of seriously considering options and outcomes was what significantly impressed them. One woman commented that, although she had not decided upon a certain career, she had learned that obtaining her G.E.D. was important for personal reasons and, after that goal was reached, she would know where and how to get the necessary information about jobs.

One of the ongoing "methods" employed by staff in directing the classes was the effort to intervene when members would continually offer poor estimates of their own abilities and skills. Often participants would be asked to relate

3 things which they do well, or 2 areas of completencies which they had achieved through their life experience or to complete the sentence "I am good at . . . ." Reflections on negative past experiences were listened to but not reinforced. The emphasis was on planning, not reminiscing and encouraging them to be responsible for their future. This was more difficult for participants who were older and yet the developmental perspective on setting goals for themselves seemed to be a concept which was meaningful. The younger members had more difficulty in setting goals and less difficulty in resolving their negative experiences.

5. EVALUATION

One of the objectives of Focus on Choice was to research the effectiveness of the format for the special target group of undereducated adults. To meet this objective, an ongoing system of evaluation was included in the program design. Upon enrollment in the program, the participants were informed that their opinions and recommendations would be consulted regularly so that project staff could judge the effectiveness of the methods, materials and activities utilized.

There was both a formal and informal method which was employed to evaluate the sessions. The formal method consisted of administering a questionairre to the participants after each session. The seminar evaluation form is included in Appendix I. The evaluation form searched for their personal reactions to the regular components of the sessions - i.e. new information, project staff, guest speakers, films, and group interaction. It also allowed them to offer anonymous suggestions for improving the

subsequent sessions. This became an important tool in allowing the staff to view whether or not the group dynamics were overpowering some individual members who would occasionally comment that the group discussion had been allowed to wander. This type of comment usually renewed our efforts to bring more structure to the next class. The positive comments assured us that the content was meeting expectations and needs.

The ranking question which searched for a composite class priority of 5 aspects of each session - group interaction, personal involvement, film guest speaker, director - usually reflected that the participants ranked group interaction highest. The sessions involving peer guest consultants were exceptions, with the majority of members writing comments such as: "Ms. _____ was very inspiring. She made me feel that I can set goals too." Also highly rated was the director whose encouragement and approval was very meaningful to participants.

In the first class, the most highly rated sessions were resume-writing and the class reports on job investigations. The session which drew the most extreme reaction was assertiveness training - the participants in the first class did not respond to the methods utilized by the trainer and expressed some confusion over the benefits to them of going through selected exercises. This reaction caused us to plan carefully for the assertiveness classes conducted in the 2nd course, making sure that participants had been exposed to the concept and were prepared to interact. In general, the lessons learned from conducting sessions with the first group of participants were very beneficial in planning how and what to incorporate or delete in conducting the second series. As a result, the assertiveness

sessions held with the second group were very highly rated to the extent that many requested additional sessions for it.

The field trips were an addition the second time around. We included them after listening to comments from the first class, many of whom expressed a fear of going to the adult education center alone. Seeing the facilities, and meeting the adult education teachers as a Focus activity was an easy way to dissolve their fears and provided a good introduction to the educational program.

The informal evaluation feedback came from discussions with the participants either in a group or individually out of the classroom. More often than not, the participants reported their personal decisions and changes which they attributed to participation in Focus. The support which they felt coming either from others in the class or from project staff had validated their efforts to take their needs and goals seriously and to view themselves with a rising sense of self-esteem. Some received support from their families in their transitional stage; others did not. What became clear to all, regardless of familial support, was the renewed sense of optimism which sprang from taking responsibility for their futures. Going back to school or work was a goal that became personally important - not just socially important.

Two final evaluation questionaries were administered to participants upon completion of Focus. One was a self-inventory containing items which were covered in the course or items which the participants had come to see as meaningful in their lives. The form was meant to serve as a somewhat objective formulation of attitudinal change over the period of class involvement. The

second form was an overall evaluation of Focus program components and aspects. Both forms are also included in Appendix I.

The results from both classes indicated that the participants viewed themselves as having made changes - some to a great degree; some just mildly in ability to: 1) set priorities for future goals; 2) request and obtain assistance from others; 3) sort out alternatives and weigh them; and 4) take action on moving toward a goal. Again, they reported a significant improvement in self-confidence and a better understanding of their skills and abilities.

The most striking singular element of Focus that seemed to be most beneficial was the process of devoting time to clarify one's needs, goals, skills, and dreams. All the methods and materials used assisted that process. The positive effects it had on the personal growth of the participants reflected by them in written and verbal comments were held to be an equally valid method of measuring our effectiveness as the statistics which are included in this report as results.

A final evaluation/recognition evening was conducted after completion of both classes. Participants from both the spring and fall groups of Focus on Choice and participants from Woman's Work, a comparable program for women with higher levels of education,were invited. The guest speaker was U.S. District Attorney, Viriginia Dill McCarty, a woman who had at one time re-entered the work force herself. She, as did the other guest consultants in Focus, spoke from her personal experience in overcoming obstacles which hampered her professional development. She also congratulated the women who were entering or re-entering the job market

and recommended that success will be derived not from individual determination alone but from each of us helping each other.

The most important consideration of the process of evaluation was the role it played in strengthening the involvement of the participants and consultants. The knowledge that their opinions and suggestions were being listened to was as valuable as the content of what they said. It also underscored the message that there is an implicit obligation to continually judge what is offered to them in future educational or employment positions to assure that their needs and interests are satified.

The project was also evaluated by the consultants and by the Department of Public Instruction representatives. The consultants offered feedback regarding topics and ways to assist the participants out of the classroom. They recognized the value of the format and their support provided the staff with appreciable reinforcement.

The project staff met twice with representatives from the state Adult Education Division - once in Indianapolis and once in Fort Wayne. Both sessions involved a presentation of the progress in program implementation. Also discussed were implications for the system of Adult Basic Education Adult Secondary Education and G.E.D. preparation in Indiana. The interaction with those knowledgeable about the systemwide operations was beneficial from the standpoint of obtaining immediate feedback on the value of the project and from the standpoint of being able to make any necessary changes in project services before project completion.

The effort to disseminate project results was greatly assisted by the opportunity to present a mini workshop at the annual meeting of the

Indiana Association of Public and Continuing Adult Educators in April, 1978. Once again, the feedback which we received from those attending the presentation was of a positive nature and helped widen the range of the potential impact which non-academic group processes has for adult education programs.

H. COMPARITIVE RESEARCH

As mentioned previously in the report, the results of Focus on Choice would be assessed not only on it's own merits or shortcomings but also on the basis of how the results compared to results of a similar program serving women who had achieved a higher level of education.

Both Focus and Woman's Work were implemented as pilot projects. Woman's Work was sponsored by a local community college - Indiana Vocational Technical College at Fort Wayne, and included most of the program features that characterized Focus on Choice.

Woman's Work employed 2 project co-directors who operated as a team in recruiting the participants and facilitating the classes. Their classes met for 3 hours per week in an informal classroom setting over an 11 week period. Methods were also similar - e.g. the utilization of peer consultants, the formation of mutual support groups, group discussion, processing of the text How to Decide, and continual evaluation of the course by participants. The overall goal was to upgrade the employability of women who were entering or re-entering the job market, emphasizing the skills of goal-setting, decision-making and values clarification. Thus, the program content and techniques were consistent with that offered through Focus on Choice.

A contrast between the programs appears in the numbers and characteristics of the participants. Woman's Work served an average of 25 women per class and ran 2 classes per college quarter. Although the project is still in operation for the Summer, 1978 quarter, the project to date has served 103 participants in the Winter and Spring quarters combined.

From the class profiles of participants who have completed Woman's Work, two socioeconomic categories stand out as major differences from those who were served in Focus on Choice. The average educational and income levels were significantly higher for Woman's Work participants. Of 103 participants, the average level of educational attainment is 14 years or some college. Fourteen participants had more than a baccalaureate degree. Seven had not graduated form high school and entered the program through IVY Tech's open admissions policy.

Although the income level dispersion ran as wide as that documented for Focus' participants, there was a greater concentration of women from higher income households. The average income level was approximately $18,000 with 36 participants over $20,000 and 7 participants under $5,000.

Other contrasts in the profiles were apparent but not as significantly different from Focus. The average age of Woman's Work participants was lower - 38.5; the number and percentage of those employed 47 (45%) was higher; and the total number of children and average per participant was lower - 90 children for 103 participants or 1 per woman. The overall effect of the above contrasts are viewed as significant in at least one important area of program implementation. e.g. recruitment. Although the

participants in Woman's Work registered equally low estimates of their own abilities and skills, indicating a low self-confidence level, their motivation to enter the types of self-assessment services offered through the program was much stronger. The women who participated in Focus on Choice generally viewed their lack of education as the major obstacle to overcome in their efforts to develop self-esteem and to prepare for employment. Woman's Work participants, with higher levels of education and income, were more prone to accept education, particularly the types of degrees traditionally achieved by women, as simply one area of their background which was not the major determinant of their present status. In short, their self-image was not as dependent upon education as it was on their life experiences as women in the home and at work. This contrast was influential in recruitment and program emphasis. The social stigma still attached to low educational status prevented many potential Focus participants from taking the first step - a transitional one at that - to entering a program exlcusively designed for them. For those who did enter, the group discussion was often centered on decisions regarding education . . . why they had dropped out, why they had not since returned, the problems associated in getting a job with less than a high school education and the questions of how to re-enter the educational system. Their low level of self-confidence was only exacerbated by negative educational experiences. What Focus was really able to provide, besides the educational emphasis, was to bring other life elements into perspective so that non-academic and work-related skills which were developed in adulthood did not hinge solely on educational achievement. Many of the Woman's Work participants, having more experience with the in-

fluence of education on their work and home lives, were able to initiate self-assessment with a least that one obstacle removed.

The results of Woman's Work evaluations share similarities with Focus in regard to the emotional and personal growth recorded in subjective comments and questionnaires. The group support and role models were rated as the most successful components and the major change noted by participants was assistance in clarifying their needs, goals and improving their self-image. The parts of the curriculum concerning job investigation, resume writing and interviewing were also noted as extremely benficial for those with defined job area interests.

The recommendations of Woman's Work staff for similar or related programs were: 1) to limit class size to 10-15 participants to allow for a more manageable group and; 2) to concentrate the treatment of self-assessment into one class offering with occupational and employment content in a different class. IVY Tech, as the sponsoring agency has been pleased with the success of the program and is currently considering including the course in it's regular class offerings. The success of the group process in assisting adults in transition seems to be evident whether the target group is segregated by educational level or not.

III. RESULTS

Project participants underwent a great deal of change over their period of involvement with Focus on Choice. Their stated goals upon enrolling in the program were not immediately identified to be educationally related. The majority were interested in obtaining job/career information with a secondary interest in obtaining G.E.D. information and discovering one's talents and interests. The least rated reason checked was to gain more self-confidence. The composite picture of the participants' goals changed so that upon project completion, education was of a priority concern as a means of developing self-confidence and qualifying for a wider range of job areas.

As of June, 1978 the number and percentage of participants who had returned to school - most in the G.E.D. preparation program at Fort Wayne Community Schools - were as follows:

	Fall Class		Spring		Cumulative	
SCHOOL RETURNEES	#	%	#	%	#	%
	6	67	9	60	15	63

Four of the 15 returness had successfully completed their G.E.D. examinations and three of that group had decided upon additional higher education. Those who did not return to school(nine)had either: 1) become employed; 2) postponed returning until Focus on Choice completion; or 3) decided that educational goals were not a priority in their live.

The employment activities and goals changed also. By providing information from consultants and printed material about job fields,

some of the participants discovered which jobs did not interest them. For those who completed occupational investigations and presented reports back to the class, job interest areas were clarified.

One participant's employment status was enriched. With her renewed sense of self-esteem she was able to request and receive two promotions. She attributed much of her success to the support and interest extended to her in Focus on Choice. Another participant changed jobs, moving from a part-time status to full-time status in a position of more importance and of greater interest to her. One remarkable change in employment was created by one woman who started a side business in her own home repairing T.V. sets. Generally, the participants who were employed when they began Focus on Choice or became employed shortly thereafter were less committed to returning to school than those who were unemployed. Those unemployed viewed their re-entry into school as a first step with eventual employment as a long-range goal. The emphasis on planning one's future which was the connecting link in many Focus sessions validated a deliberateness in choosing an occupation. Furthermore, the job counseling services offered on an ongoing basis at the Women's Bureau were extended to all participants who chose to postpone employment until educational goals were met

The quantitative results discussed above were gratifying to those associated with the project. However, the more dramatic and important results were the changes in attitudes and the improved self-esteem which the majority of participants indicated through questionnaires and informal

comments. The non-judgemental, supportive environment sought by the staff and reinforced by the participants was extremely instrumental in assisting the growth process experienced by many of the women involved in Focus on Choice. After they had shaped their behavior and goals to meet others' needs and expectations for much of their lives, Focus on Choice suggested and encouraged them to define their own role in life and to balance personal needs and goals with their future as assumed by families and friends. It was a true revelation for many that options and alternatives even existed regarding education, employment and lifestyle. At the risk of sounding clichéd, the energy of creating their future was unleashed by the simple act of questioning the rationale of each decision and considering major events in one's life as decisions whether one makes them oneself or simply agrees to it. Witnessing the struggles and ambivalence which many of the women experienced in discussing past events in their lives and future possibilities was probably the most difficult part of the project for the staff. On the other hand, participating in their growth and renewed enthusiasm for particular goals was the easiest part and, without question, the highpoint of the program.

Herewith are some of the comments written by participants on the final evaluation form.

"I have such a dream, already come true for me, thru Focus on Choice. That is I found out I'm really a person and can do many things."

Over the next five years, I want to:

"Acquire a high school diploma or equivalent and return to the job market for a better job; I am taking 3 courses as the result

of information acquired in your courses."

I want to:

"Train for a better job. Work at being a better person and also work at my marriage."

"You gave me more confidence in myself and the push I needed to finish my education."

"X (consultant) was just great for me. I went away feeling that I could do anything I put my mind to."

From a past participant who sent in a copy of her G.E.D. results:

"Enclosed is . . . a copy of a certificate, that I believe you will be interested in. I did it . . . . Thanks again for your encouragement. I needed a push and you gave it to me. Thanks again."

The above comments are doubly gratifying for us since the same women had spent a great amount of time in the first part of the sessions, announcing lists of things they could not ever be qualified for. The potential for carrying their newly acquired confidence and information to their children and others in adult education is an additional measure of the results of Focus. We have termed it the ripple effect with the hope that the positive benefits and accomplishments achieved by Focus participants will affect the lives of those in their social environments.

The overall goal of Focus was a long-range one, sighting both employment and personal skills as targets for upgrading. The results discussed above have been achieved over a short range of time and it

is acknowledged that the long range results are still not visible. The staff of the Women's Bureau have made a commitment to track the "graduates" of Focus over the next 3-5 year period to provide some system of accounting for the long range goal. The method for doing this will be administering a concise mailing questionnaire once per year using many of the questions and stimulae familiar to participants. It will serve not only as a tracking system but also as a regeneration of the low-key guidance and encouragement offered through the course.

IV. Conclusions/Recommendations

This final section of the report will highlight the priority conclusions of Focus on Choice with corresponding recommendations for existing adult education programs. The description of all the program components in the section on design also includes conclusions on degree of impact, so the reader is also referred back to the pertinent subsections for a more detailed account of special program elements.

Given the constraints of the scarce resources available to adult education programs and given the relatively expanded growth of adult education in general as a specialized field, new and innovative techniques to reach undereducated adults are especially needed. Focus on Choice, although it adapted methods and materials from successfully tested program models for various adult target groups has demonstrated that adults in transition regardless of educational attainment have similar needs to assess their direction in life and will respond to the methods of group support and discussion to clarify their goals.

The developmental perspective of the adult life cycle as one of a shifting mix of stability and change is gaining support and validation throughout the field of adult education. When it gets down to the level of applying the theory to practice, it implies that adult educators need to be aware of both the emotional and societal context in which the adult in transition operates. Knox, in Adult Development and Learning, suggests several points of relevance concerning the results of Focus on Choice:

1. Re: Women's Roles

   "Practitioners can assist women with such transitions by providing relevant educational programs and counseling services and referring them to mutual support groups, so that the process contributes to career and educational development and personal growth." (Knox, 1977, pp. 512)

2. "In best practice, practitioners in the helping professions help adults help themselves. In almost all instances, forms of assistance that encourage initiative and self-sufficiency are desirable, and forms of assistance that foster dependency on professionals or others are undesirable. Effective practitioners sometimes serve as knowledge brokers and change agents." (Knox, 1977, pp 553)

3. "Practitioners with a commitment to human growth and development can assist clients to become more proactive in dealing with the shifting priorities, and increasing options. (Knox, 1977, pp. 558)

4. (Paraphrased) The perspective of viewing "problems" vs. the perspective of finding "opportunities" is related to goal-setting by stimulating

a change in a "reactive" outlook to a "proactive" one. (Knox, 1977, p. 562)

5. "Practitioners can be more effective if they understand that the goals and values of their clients are important ingredients in the successful living of an adult life." (Knox, 1977, p. 568)

The participants in Focus were women in a transitional stage of life both in regards to their education, their role in the family, their role in the job market, and their concern for re-evaluating their overall future. It does not seem to be a great leap to consider that many more adults, perhaps the majority in adult basic or adult secondary education, are also in transition. One area of life does not progress or change without affecting other areas. It is perhaps for this reason that adult education teachers often find themselves devoting as much time to counseling as they do to instruction. Focus on Choice actually became a forum through which the participants provided counseling and support for each other so that their time at the adult education center was concentrated on academic work.

The use of group discussion is not prevalent in adult basic education since the adults often work at their own pace with individual assistance given by the teacher or aide. The benefits derived by Focus participants from having had the opportunity to meet with others who were confronting the same questions proved to be quite significant. It is strongly recommended that the opportunity for adult students to meet in a roundtable setting be included in existing adult education programs. The matter of setting up a structured or non-structured curriculum is not as important as the simple opportunity for teachers and students to come together

either as an orientation to the program or as an ongoing opportunity to discuss what is happening in their lives concurrent with their return to school. Application of the developmental perspective by practitioners of adult education in discussions of goals, values, alternatives and decisions seems overdue and should be strongly emphasized.

Of all the elements of Focus on Choice which were discussed in the program design, the two components which were most significant to participants and which are readily adaptable to other programs are peer consultants and group discussion. The Focus on self-assessment contributed strongly to the participants efforts to match their needs and opportunities. If replicated elsewhere, the above elements would be essential. The text, the films, and the job related information was effective in fulfilling the particular objectives of Focus, but, again, if the format were adapted to existing programs of adult education they would not be as important as the development of group process in achieving the personal skills of self-direction. And, of utmost concern to adminstrators, the provision of an adapted Focus on Choice is not cost-prohibitive. The impact it had on solidifying the motivation of participants to return to school with an understanding of how the education fits into their individual life priorities suggests a projected savings in staff time, a decrease in number of adults who drop out of the existing program, and a method for supplementing the academic objectives underlying the raison d'etre of adult education. For those wishing to improve the quality of their services to adult students, a Focus on Choice type of format offers an excellent vehicle with which

to make the contact informally yet professionally. Ongoing program evaluation was another effective method to maintain contact with the expectations and needs of the participants. The inclusion of a simple evaluative questionnaire for existing programs is a recommendation for adaptation.

In order to develop the above recommendations to adult educators to try offering either a self-assessment course or career education course or both to students already enrolled in adult education, the staff of Focus on Choice plans to conduct a staff training project next year. It will also be a 309 Special Project and, as such, will be testing the hypothesis that Focus on Choice, is readily adaptable to existing programs and will attempt to create concrete examples of how the adaptation can be executed. The positive results experienced in Focus suggest that a minimum amount of resources expended by administration will result in similar successes for adult students who have a need for services specifically designed to validate and assist their efforts in the personal growth associated with the return to school and work.

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APPENDIX

LETTER	PAGE NO.	CONTENT
A	61	Job Descriptions of Project Staff
B	63	List of Project Consultants
C	67	Sample of Consultant Contract
D	68	Sample Resume
E	69	Project Brochure
F	70	Public Relations
G	71	Films used in Project
H	72	Handouts
I	80	Evaluation Forms

JOB DESCRIPTIONS OF
PROJECT STAFF

Appendix A

A. POSITION:

Project Director/Instructor - part-time

QUALIFICATIONS

-Graduation from accredited college, with 2-5 years experience in education and administration.
-Knowledge of the functions and purposes of programs based on mutural support systems.
-Ability to communicate well with others, work effectively with individuals, groups and community agencies.

RESPONSIBILITIES

-Directs overall implementation of project.
-Assists in recruitment and admission and registration of participants.
-Directs publicity of program and prepares educational material for project.
-Directs project sessions.
-Assists in screening and hiring staff including consultants
-Coordinates individual or small groups provides career or personal counseling outside of class meetings.
-Assists in the evaluation of the program.
-Submits quarterly and end of year fiscal reports.
-Ensures that fiscal policies and procedures shall be in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules and regulations.

B. POSITION

Research Coordinator - full-time

QUALIFICATIONS

-Graduation from accredited college or university, with degree in behavorial Science.
-2-5 years of experience related to service or community organization.
-Ability to collect, compile and analyze data needed for research and evaluation purposes.
-Knowledge of related community agencies
-Written communication skills

RESPONSIBILITIES

-Selects and develops research, evaluation and dissemination instruments.
-Compiles project progress reports as requested by State Agency
-Develops and distributes project brochure.
-Assists with intake to obtain and maintain files on applicants and participants.
-Researches results of other programs locally and nationally serving similiar groups.
-Compiles results of internal project evaluations
-Responsible for final report be submitted to State of Indiana, Department of Public Instruction, Division of Adult and Community Education.
-Coordinates project information dissemination, including an evaluation of techniques employed.

C. POSITION

Secretary - part-time

QUALIFICATIONS

One or more years of experience in a receptionist, clerical, or secretarial position.
-Knowledge of office procedures.
-Ability to type at the rate of 45 wpm.
-Ability to work well with others.

RESPONSIBILITIES

-Provides clerical and secretarial to the project.
-Acts as receptionist where appropriate.
-Types reports and correspondence
-Provides information about project to interested persons and agencies.

CONSULTANTS

Appendix B

I. PEER ROLE MODELS	CONTENT
1. Mary Jackson, Supervisor, Classified Personnel, Fort Wayne Community Schools	Her faith and risk taking ability led to her G.E.D and the journey from factory worker to supervisor at Fort Wayne Community School. G.E.D. Program & present status.
2. Sandra Murphy, Student IUPU-FW Women's Studies, IUPU-FW	Re-entry as an adult at the college level with combination of family responsibilities, fear of change and drive to take responsibility for self.
3. Judy Oliver, participant, Focus on Choice, Class I, obtained G.E.D.	Struggle with dealing with the internal & external barriers between her & her goal to obtain a G.E.D. How Focus on Choice helped her remove the barriers and acheive her goal.
4. Evelyn Teel, participant Focus on Choice, Class I, obtained G.E.D.	Impact Focus on Choice had in encouraging her to entry G.E.D. program, and to set goals for continuing her education

II. INFORMATION CONSULTANTS	CONTENT
1. Karen Bojrab, President Fort Wayne Women's Bureau	Service of Fort Wayne Women's Bureau
2. Debby Brian, Reporter, News Sentinel	Careers in Journalism
3. Richard Deputy, Supervisor of Adult Learning Center Continuing Education, F.W.C.S.	Opportunities in the Adult Basic Education program at F.W.C.S.

II. INFORMATION CONSULTANTS (con't)	CONTENT
4. Rikki Goldstein, Advocate Coordinator, Fort Wayne Women's Bureau	Hidden job market services of Fort Wayne Women's Bureau's advocacy program.
5. Marion Hedrick, Insurance Agent, New York Life	Financial Planning & Wills Experience as career woman in a non-traditional field.
6. Judy Hollander, Victim's Assistance Counselor, Allen County Police Department.	Services of Victims' Assistance Program; problems of the overeducated without a clear career focus.
7. Ann Hunsberger; Assistant Administrator, Three Rivers Neighborhood Health Center, Private counseling	Talked about "shoulds" as barriers.
8. Mary Kay Koepp, Chief Deputy Allen County Auditors Office	Sexual stereotyping, myths and facts.
9. Robert Leeper, Director of Instruction	Educational opportunities at IVY Tech.
10. Anne Mettler, Machine Rewinder	Non-traditional jobs for women.
11. Janet Mitchell, Attorney, Metropolitan Human Relations Commission	Legal rights as related to employment-personal experience with sex discrimination.
12. Jeanne Nuechterlein, Coordinator "Women's Work" program at IVY Tech, career planning for re-entry women.	Developing a support system-developing a healthy self-concept.
13. Sally O'Kane, Counselor, CETA Title I	An overview of what the Fort Wayne CETA Consortuim offers.
14. Norma Pinney, Instructor, Health Careers Regional Vocational School, Fort Wayne Community School.	Careers in the Health Field.

II. INFORMATION CONSULTANTS (con't)	CONTENT
15. Raymond Quance, Assistant Director Continuing Education, Fort Wayne Community School.	Educational opportunities through Continuing Education, Education Center, Fort Wayne Community School.
16. Carol Sowle, Development Analyst Lincoln National Life Insurance	Careers in Data Processing.
17. Rivkah Sweedler, Freelance Artist	The process of changing careers based upon identifying personal goals and values, willingness to take risks and explore options.
18. Kathi Weiss, Bail Commissioner, Allen Superior Court	Hidden job market-unadvertised jobs.
19. Mary Ann White, Director, Fort Wayne Women's Bureau, Drop-in Child Care Center	Services offered at the Center

III. PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANTS	CONTENT
1. Carol Durham, Assistant Administrator, Mental Health Technology; Private Practice in counseling	Conducted two-2 hour series of assertiveness training
2. Kathy Mettler, Therapist, Private Practice and Consulting Centers: "Vocational Potential Evaluation."	Conducted two-2 hour series of assertiveness training
3. Julie Sillaway, Employment Director for Allen County	Conducted workshop, with role playing on interviewing skills
4. Florence Smith, Career Counseling and Placement Offices, Manchester College, N. Manchester, IN	Conducted two-3 hour workshop on resume writing

IV. OTHER	CONTENT
1. Pat Kern, Artist in Service Fort Wayne Women's Bureau, Visual Artist	Conducted two experiential series: Creation of life collages and "Finding your way with Clay" to demonstrate the use of art processes as methods of self-assessment and values clarification.
2. Ranny Levy, Dancer in Service Fort Wayne Women's Bureau, Practitioner & Teacher T'ai Chi and Modern Dance	Conducted one experiential series, teaching techniques of body movement, dance and breathing exercises to relieve stress, focus concentration on self and create bonding with the group.

Appendix C

Consultant Contract

I agree to participate as a consultant for the Focus on Choice Project sponsored by the Fort Wayne Women's Bureau and funded through a grant from the Indiana Department of Public Instruction. The consultant fee is set at $10 an hour. The project meets at the First Wayne Street Methodist Church.

Date_____

Time_____

Subject matter to be covered_____

_____

_____

Signature_____

Appendix D

SAMPLE RESUME
DEVELOPED BY FOCUS ON CHOICE PARTICIPANT

NAME
ADDRESS
PHONE

PERSONAL: Born 2/18/38 Excellent health Married

JOB OBJECTIVE: To apply my selling and managerial skill.

ADMINISTRATIVE: Organized successful benefits for fund-raising, with creative skills.

PUBLIC RELATIONS: Had several jobs which involved people as customers, information seekers.

ACCOUNTING: Did account books for two businesses. Computed tax forms for family and neighbors.

TEACHING: Taught crochet and needlepoint.

EXPERIENCE: Managed grocery store, with all ordering and booking responsibility. Sold glassware at home parties. Had to have sense of humor and be attentive to the customers.

EDUCATION: Getting G.E.D. Determined to get a degree in accounting and business administration

LAST EMPLOYER: Factory work, operated press, router, riveter, automatic drills, hand drills, sanders, saws, hand saws, punch press, deflasher. Taught others how to do job required.

Will travel and meet public.

Available for employment June 1, 1978

WHAT can WE

OFFER

YOU?

Job Information!

Counseling!

Education Opportunities!

Role Models!

Assertiveness Training!

Goal Setting!

Mutual Support Group!

Decision Making!

WHY would YOU

choose

FOCUS ON CHOICE

- Step by Step

Program helps organize

decisions.

- "Small group" means

that you won't get lost

in the crowd.

- Friendly informal setting.

- Low cost child care for

your preschoolers can be

arranged.

- Course materials provided.

HOW TO ENROLL

1. Fill out pre-application
2. Detach and mail to address on

   the form by January 18, 1978
3. Call 424-7977 for more information.
4. Registration:9:00 AM to 12:00 noon

January 25
First Wayne St. U.M. Church
326 East Wayne Street
Fort Wayne, Indiana

WHAT

is

FOCUS

on

CHOICE ?

- Free 13 week course
- Meets Wednesdays

  9:00 - 12:00 noon
- First session is January 25, 1978
- Meets at First Wayne St.

United Methodist Church

326 E. Wayne

Fort Wayne, Ind.
- Limited class size
- For persons who were not

able to finish high school
- For persons who have

basic reading skills

- SPONSORED BY:

  FORT WAYNE WOMEN'S BUREAU INC.

FOCUS ON CHOICE PRE-APPLICATION

( )YES I CHOOSE TO SIGN UP FOR THE FOCUS ON CHOICE PROGRAM

-Please Print-

Name _____ The Last Year I
Street _____ Attended School was 19___
City _____ State _____ Zip
Phone _____ Date
Signature _____

FOCUS ON CHOICE
FORT WAYNE WOMAN'S BUREAU
BOX 554
FORT WAYNE, IND.46801

78

. . . we exist for you

and with you . . .

FWWB

Fort Wayne Women's Bureau, Inc.
Phone: 219-743-0033

The work reported herein was performed pursuant to a grant from the United States Office of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare and the Indiana State Department of Public Instruction. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the United States Office of Education or the Indiana Department of Public Instruction and no official endorsement by either should be inferred.

Fort Wayne Women's Bureau 1977

WHAT do YOU WANT?

Independence?

Self-worth? Homemaking?

Money? Degree?

Career? Divorce?

Marriage? Friends?

G.E.D.? Skills?

Job?

FOCUS ON CHOICE

77

for your future

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Appendix F

I. Radio and Television

	DATE	NAME OF SHOW	STATION	NO. OF MIN
1.	8-25-77	Special Reports - Ken Moore	WOWO-Radio	20 min
2.	8-31-77	Editor's Desk - Bill Griffin	WKJG-T.V.	10 min
3.	12-21-77	Don Chevolet	WPTA-T.V.	10 min
4.	12-28-77	Special Reports-Ken Moore	WOWO-Radio	20 min
5.	1-11-78	Anne Colone	WANE-T.V.	10 min
6.	1-12-78	Editor's Desk - Bill Griffin	WKJG-T.V.	10 min
7.	1-17-78	Minority Report-Jay Webb Horton	WANE-T.V.	60 min

II. Newspaper articles are on the next few pages.

A 31-YEAR-OLD DREAM FULFILLED

Program 'Focuses' on Potential

By DEBBY BRIAN
Accent Staff Writer

Focus on Choice was developed to help people dream a little...and then match those dreams to reality.

Mary Jackson did just that a few years ago as she sat at an assembly line in a local factory. Now she can't say enough good things about people and programs trying to help others discover themselves and their potentials.

Mrs. Jackson, supervisor of the Fort Wayne Community Schools' Classified Personnel Department, will be one of several local women who will be guest speakers during the 13-week program being offered by the Fort Wayne Women's Bureau, Inc.

Aimed at people who have not graduated from high school, Focus on Choice will be on Wednesday mornings from 9 to noon, beginning Sept. 14. It will be held in the First Wayne Street United Methodist Church. There will be no charge to participants.

Funded through a grant from the Adult Education Act through the Indiana Department of Public Instruction, the program will work on goal-setting, assertiveness training, role-playing and job and career education.

"Wherever you have people honestly trying to help others to improve, no matter what their lot, then you're going to make some gains," Mrs. Jackson said of the program. "Just to get a person to say 'I can' is important."

According to Harriet Miller, Bureau director and a program instructor, women like Mary Jackson have been asked to get involved because they have experienced many of the same problems and feelings participants will face.

"Taking time and looking at where your life is going is scary. We want women to know that just because they don't have a diploma, doesn't mean they don't have talents," Ms. Miller said. "We're asking community women to come in who've already gone through this procedure."

Mary Jackson's story started when she quit high school at the age of 16.

"The counseling I got in high school," Mrs. Jackson recalled, "was that there were no reasons for me to go on and finish high school, because all I could ever be anyway was a maid or something like that.

"At first, I really rebelled," the gentle, black woman said, "and then I realized she (the counselor) was probably right."

At 16, Mrs. Jackson left the City and went to Chicago because maids were making more there than in Fort Wayne.

She worked for several years in both cleaning and factory jobs, and all the while, she said, books were her comfort and religion her stabilizer.

When she felt discrimination, she recalled the words her father always taught her: "If they knew better, they'd be better."

While in Chicago, she married and she and her husband moved back to her native Fort Wayne.

She worked on and off between having her two children and eventually started working at General Electric Co., where she remained for 20 years.

"It was just so unrewarding," she said. "There was no upward mobility and no feeling of doing any community service. My children were grown and I felt useless. And I kept thinking that someday I would have to face God and admit I'd done nothing worthwhile.

"At first, this bugged me just a little," Mrs. Jackson said, "and then it bugged me big."

Although she didn't know what choices she had, she did know whatever she decided she'd need a high school diploma. Because, like those who will be participating in Focus on Choice, Mrs. Jackson was handicapped in the job market without one.

"I'd been out of school for 31 years," she said. "My brother-in-law had always encouraged me to go back and finish, but I'd always said I was too old. Once I'd made up my mind though, I got young again real fast."

Mrs. Jackson took the battery of tests needed to receive her GED, and on the first one she took, in English, she scored the highest of anyone who ever had taken the test locally.

"When the woman told me that," she said, "I really didn't believe her. I just thought she was trying to make me feel good. I was scared to death," she continued, "because after all, I'd always been told I could never be anything but a scrub woman. The way they were talking made me feel like I wasn't Mary Jackson anymore. I knew there was no way I could be as good as what they were saying."

But she was, and eventually she left her factory job and went to work for Fort Wayne Community Schools as a teacher's assistant in the Adult Learning Lab.

"Getting that job," she said, "was the best thing that ever happened to me. It was exactly what I wanted for my life."

After she started her job with FWCS, she also started taking classes at St. Francis College. She has taken classes there and at the local Indiana-Purdue University campus ever since.

In the meantime, she moved up the ranks until four years ago when she was named to her current position.

"I think people have to be told this is possible," she said, "and it helps so much to know that someone cares if you make it or not.

"The support I got helped so much," she added. "My dad and my sister and people at FWCS...they helped me make up that 31-year gap."

Mrs. Jackson said she would like to be able to "sprinkle my feelings about this all around".

"I know I can't do that so I'll try to tell people they can do these things. And if they don't know what direction to go in, I tell them to pray about it. I'm a living witness that God does answer prayers."

Mrs. Jackson also thinks the FWCS adult education program can be a light in the darkness for some people.

"You've got to have the desire first," she said of making a change in life, "and then you've got to find out what you want to do. Then, you learn what's available and how much energy it's going to take to get there. Then, you pray and proceed."

Mrs. Jackson believes Focus on Choice also can provide the push some people need to start the process.

Director Miller described Focus on Choice as a program for people who want to take control of their lives.

"How does anyone really know," Ms. Miller said, "if they don't set some time aside to set goals and to examine their lives. That's what Focus on Choice hopes to offer. Focus on Choice is a commitment to youself."

Registration for the program will be Sept. 7 and 8 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the First Wayne Street United Methodist Church, 326 East Wayne St. Child care will be available through the Bureau's already-established Drop-In Child Care Center.

Monica Pugh will be the co-instructor for the pilot program, the first of its kind in the State.

According to Ms. Miller, the program will be offered again in January.

APPENDIX F (CONT.)

FT. WAYNE NEWS SENTINEL AUGUST 29, 1980

79

80

PLAN YOUR CAREER

Focus on Choice To Begin Classes For Non-Grads

FT. WAYNE
NEWS SENTINEL
SEPTEMBER 13, 1977

Focus on Choice, a career education course for persons who have not graduated from high school, begins Wednesday morning and participants are still being accepted.

According to Harriet Miller, director of the Fort Wayne Women's Bureau and instructor for the course, the free 13-week course will help people to discover their abilities and interests, assess their potential and build self-confidence. The class will begin at 9 a.m. and last until noon and child care, at a minimal cost, will be available. The course will be at the First Wayne Street United Methodist Church, 326 East Wayne St.

The project is sponsored by the Bureau and funded through a grant from the Indiana Department of Public Instruction. For more information, persons may call the Bureau at 424-7977.

High school drop-outs can take course

FT. WAYNE
JOURNAL-GAZETTE
SEPTEMBER 7, 1977

For adults who haven't graduated from high school but have basic reading skills, the Fort Wayne Women's Bureau is offering a free, 13-week career education course called Focus on Choice.

The course is taught from 9 a.m. to noon on Wednesdays starting Sept. 14 at the First Wayne Street United Methodist Church, 326 E. Wayne St.

Funded through a grant from the Indiana Department of Public Instruction, the course will delve into goal-setting skills, decision-making, job information and assertiveness training.

Registration is today and Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at First Wayne Street United Methodist Church. Class size is limited.

Course materials are provided and low-cost child care is available for preschoolers. For more information, contact the Women's Bureau at 424-7977.

Program Focuses Future

FT WAYNE
NEWS SENTINEL
JANUARY 21, 1978

By DEBBY BRIAN
Accent Staff Writer

Area women will have another opportunity to focus on choices for their future beginning Wednesday.

The program, Focus on Choice, is being offered for the second time by the Fort Wayne Women's Bureau, Inc. The 13-week course, for persons who have not yet graduated from high school, offers a step-by-step program on job hunting, counseling, education opportunities, assertiveness training, goal setting and decision making.

The sessions, funded through a grant from the Office of Education, Department of HEW, and the Indiana State Department of Public Instruction, will meet Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to noon at the First Wayne Street United Methodist Church. There is no fee for participants.

For one woman, who recently completed the first session of Focus on Choice, decision making was the main objective.

"I went," said the woman, who asked that her name not be used, "because I wanted to look at deciding. I have trouble making decisions because there always seem to be so many things to chose from.

"I wanted to see how others made decisions, and then apply that to myself.

"One big thing I learned through the class," the young mother of five continued, "is how to go about gathering the information to be able to make the decisions."

For another participant of the first Focus on Choice program, education was the end result.

On Monday, Evelyn Teel received her General Education Development (GED), equivalent of a high school diploma.

"Oh, I feel great, just great about it," Mrs. Teel said of the accomplishment. "It's something I've always wanted to do, and now I've done it."

At 55, Mrs. Teel decided to attend Focus on Choice in hopes it would give her the confidence to go back to school.

"I got a lot of confidence from that class," she said. "Everybody was so friendly and the instructors would always say 'You can do it, if you really want to'. And now I know that's true."

Both women see the course as very positive and they are happy it is being offered to the community for the second time.

"Some of the women in the class that missed some days told me they were going to go back this time and make up what they missed," Mrs. Teel said.

And the young mother added: "If nothing else the class allows you to see there are a lot of other people that aren't sure either."

The younger woman said she definitely is looking into the possibility of getting a job, and she is going to start taking classes towards a high school diploma.

"Being a wife and a mother . . . that's just not quite enough for me anymore. My youngest will be in first grade next year, and I turned 30 last week. That means I've got at least 30 more years ahead of me to go on and do something.

"Everyone wants to be important," she smiled, "and motherhood is important. But before I was a mother I was interested in other things, and I still am."

For Mrs. Teel, gaining the GED in itself was a goal; she isn't really looking for a job.

"But if I ever wanted to get a job," she said, "now I'd be more qualified.

"So many times we don't think we're quite as good as other people," she said, "but by going to the classes, I learned I've got something on the ball, too."

The fact several participants did return to school was a plus as far as the department making the grant was concerned.

Linda Zyler, consultant for staff development and special projects of the State Department of Public Instruction, said in a recent telephone interview: "I think this project may have reached some adults who wouldn't have gone back to school on their own. The program gave them the incentive.

"I'm particularly pleased with the number returning to basic education programs."

Harriet Miller, executive director of the Bureau and an instructor for the program, also thinks the program is significant for the community.

"The enthusiasm the participants generated among themselves was great . . . it was contagious. They found and gave lots of support to one another.

"We saw really dramatic growth and change during the classes. Age, economic status, race and social background didn't matter. The women really bonded together as a group."

The only changes for the second session, Ms. Miller said, will be using past participants as resource persons and going on two field trips.

"We'll be going to the Fort Wayne Community School's facilities so the women can see what's available. When you don't know, you're afraid to start," she added, "and many women don't know what's available in the way of education for them.

"We'll also be touring Ivy Tech for much the same reason . . . to increase their awareness of some of the non-traditional fields available to women so it will be easier for them to make their future plans."

Registration for the course will be taken during the first class session. Child care, at minimal cost, will be available.

FILMS

Appendix G

	TITLE	SOURCE	LENGTH	COST
1.	"Back To School: Back To Work"	American Personnel and Guidance Association 1607 New Hampshire Ave N.W. Washington, D.C. 20009	20 min	$25.00
2.	"Growing Up Female"	New Day Film Library P.O. Box 315 Franklin Lakes, N.J. 07417	50 min	$35.00
3.	"Joyce at 34"	New Day Film Library P.O. Box 315 Franklin Lakes, N J. 07417	28 min	$39.00
4.	"Mens Lives"	New Day Film Library P.O. Box 315 Franklin Lakes, N.J. 07417	43 min	$60.00
5.	"RollOver"	Herstory Films, Inc 137 East 13th Street New York, N.Y. 10003	10 min	$23.00
6.	"The Woman's Game"	Modern Talking Picture Serive, Inc. 2323 New Hyde Park Road New Hyde Park, N.Y. 11040	28 min	FREE
7.	"Why Not a Woman?"	Association Films, Inc 866 Third Ave. New York, N.Y. 10022	25 min	$ 8.55

Appendix H

Sample of Handouts taken from (Khosh, CUE, 1977)

VALUE CLARIFICATION

Experience CUE

Mark your preferences in rank order:

Values	Rank
Health	( )
Religion	( )
Security	( )
Family	( )
Travel	( )
Aesthetics	( )
Power	( )
Marriage	( )
Justice	( )
Recognition, Approval	( )
Honesty	( )
Love	( )
Personal Autonomy *(Freedom)*	( )
Friendship	( )
Emotional Well-Being	( )
Appearance	( )
Knowledge, Wisdom	( )
Pleasure	( )
Altruism *(Social Welfare)*	( )
Achievement	( )

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VALUES AUCTION

	Amount I Budgeted	Highest Amount I bid	Top Bid?
A satisfying and fulfilling marriage			
A way to do your own thing without hassling			
The Presidency			
The love and admiration of the whole world			
Unlimited travel and tickets to any concert, play, opera or ballet			
Complete self-confidence with a positive outlook on life			
A happy family relationship			
To be the most attractive person in the world			
To live to a hundred with no illness			
The most complete library of great books for your own private use			
Harmony with God			
Time with nothing to do but enjoy yourself with all needs and desires automatically met			
To be the richest person in the world			
A house overlooking the most beautiful view in the world			
A chance to rid the world of prejudice			
A chance to serve the sick and needy			
To be voted outstanding person of the year and praised in every newspaper in the world			
Perfect insight into the meaning of life			
A way to rid the world of unfairness, graft and lying			
A chance to set your own working conditions			
The perfect love affair			
To master the profession of your choice			

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VALUES AUCTION KEY

		Values
A satisfying and fulfilling marriage	___	(marriage)
A way to do your own thing without hassling	___	(personal autonomy)
The Presidency	___	(power)
The love and admiration of the whole world	___	(love, friendship, approval)
Unlimited travel and tickets to any concert, play, opera or ballet	___	(travel, pleasure, aesthetics)
Complete self-confidence with a positive outlook on life	___	(emotional well-being)
A happy family relationship	___	(family)
To be the most attractive person in the world	___	(appearance)
To live to a hundred with no illness	___	(health)
The most complete library of great books for your own private use	___	(knowled e)
Harmony with God	___	(religion)
Time with nothing to do but enjoy yourself with all needs and desires automatically met	___	(pleasure)
To be the richest person in the world	___	(security)
A house overlooking the most beautiful view in the world	___	(aesthetics, achievement)
A chance to rid the world of prejudice	___	(justice)
A chance to serve the sick and needy	___	(altruism)
To be voted outstanding person of the year and praised in every newspaper in the world	___	(recognition, approval)
Perfect insight into the meaning of life	___	(wisdom)
A way to rid the world of unfairness, graft and lying	___	(honesty)
A chance to set your own working conditions	___	(personal autonomy)
The perfect love affair	___	(love)
To master the profession of your choice	___	(achievement)

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AIDS TO SUCCESSFUL GOAL SETTING

The following questions should be asked as a goal is set:

1. Is the goal achievable?
   a. Can I accomplish it in the time span I have set?
   b. Does the achievement of the goal depend only on me, and not on conditions outside of me?

2. Do I believe I can achieve this goal?
   a. Are my skills and abilities equal to this goal?

3. Will I know when I have done it?
   a. Have I set my goal in specific terms?

4. Do I want to do it?
   a. Is the goal one that interests me?

5. Is the goal presented without an alternative?
   a. Have I made a decision?
   b. Am I focused in on what I will be doing?

6. Is the goal motivating to me?
   a. Are my primary motivators involved?

7. Is the goal of value to me?
   a. Is the goal compatible with my values?

OCCUPATIONAL STUDY SHEET NO. 1

OCCUPATION: _____

Work Description:

Personal Requirements:

Training/Education/Experience Required:

How Enter?

Hours/Earnings:

Advantages/Disadvantages:

Related Work:

How Do You and the Occupation Fit?

Is It a Choice Worth Pursuing Now or at Some Other Time? Why or Why Not?

OCCUPATIONAL STUDY SHEET NO. 2

Experience CUE
Occupational Evaluation

Name _____

Please print or type: Date _____

1. Name of occupation investigated, and place visited:

2. What kind of work is done:

3. What does the work mainly involve? ( ) Things ( ) Data or Ideas ( ) People

   Description:

4. What does the work require?

   a. Education or training needed (kind and amount) _____
   b. Skills needed _____
   c. Other (fill in) _____

5. What is the prospective employment outlook? (opportunities for mature women re-entering the employment force)

6. Does the company offer an on-the-job training program?

7. What is the average starting salary at the entry level?

8. Name of person you interviewed and position in company.

9. Please request literature describing the occupation and company for distribution to Experience CUE group members.

To add to your awareness of your experience, try making several lists, as follows:

1. What practical experience have I gained since I last worked?

_____

_____

2. What new skills have I developed? _____

_____

_____

3. What initiative have I had to exercise? _____

_____

_____

4. As housewife, mother, daughter, friend, citizen, what have I been doing especially well? _____

_____

_____

5. As a career woman, what have I done? _____

_____

_____

6. Just for fun, what have I done? _____

_____

_____

Any other accomplishments that I can remember, I will list here:

1.

2.

3.

_____

Note: From "Planning for Work," Catalyst, Self-Guidance Series G1, 1974, pp. 33-36. Copyright 1974 by Catalyst. Reprinted with permission.

I have:	How Often	How Well	How Recently	How Much Enjoyed
Worked with ideas				
Worked with abstract concepts				
Worked with mechanical things				
Worked with the sick or elderly				
Worked with _____ (write in) things				
Organized a program or project				
Spoken to large public groups				
Spoken to small, intimate groups				
Written for publication				
Worked with my hands				
Handled matters requiring attention to detail				
Done analytical work in _____ (write in)				
Taken major responsibilities				
Been able to set priorities				
Done creative work in _____ (write in)				
Done research in _____ (write in)				
Trained or taught others				
Made big decisions				
Been able to say "no"				
Taken major responsibilities in community				
Sold material goods				
Sold ideas				
Handled money				
Add your own categories below:				
_____				
_____				

Appendix I

FOCUS ON CHOICE

Seminar Evaluation Form

Date _____
Session No._____

Directions: Place a check in the appropriate space which best expresses your feeling to the question.

1.	How would you describe today's session?	good ____	fair ____	poor ____
2.	How important were the problems discussed?	very ____	somewhat ____	not-at-all ____
3.	How much did you learn?	a great deal ____	little ____	nothing ____
4.	Did the instructor stay on the subject?	very much ____	somewhat ____	hardly-at-all ____
5.	Did guest speaker stay on the subject?	very much ____	somewhat ____	hardly-at-all ____
6.	To what extent were your expectations met from today's seminar?	completely ____	partially ____	not-at-all ____
7.	How significant was the information presented today?	very ____	somewhat ____	not-at-all ____
8.	How useful for you were the materials which were used in today's session?	very ____	somewhat ____	not-at-all ____
9.	Of what personal value were the skills presented today?	very ____	somewhat ____	not-at-all ____

10. Rank in order of importance (#1 for most important, #2 for the second most important, etc.) the following aspects of todays's seminar:

_____ group interaction

_____ personal involvement

_____ film

_____ guest speaker

_____ director

What could have been added or subtracted from today's topic to improve the quality or content of the session?

Appendix I (con't)

Self-Assessment Form

FOCUS ON CHOICE

SELF-INVENTORY

This questionnaire is designed to determine if you feel that any changes have occurred in your ability to view your skills, abilities and goals. Please mark the phrase on the right side of the page which would best describe your opinion.

COMPARED TO 4 MONTHS AGO, MY ABILITY TO:	Improved greatly	Improved somewhat	Not Changed	Declined Somewhat	Declined greatly
1. define the values that are important to me has	___	___	___	___	___
2. understand my needs has	___	___	___	___	___
3. understand the needs of my family and friends has	___	___	___	___	___
4. balance my needs with my responsibilities has	___	___	___	___	___
5. sort out alternatives in relation to my future has	___	___	___	___	___
6. judge possible outcomes of my alternatives has	___	___	___	___	___
7. set priorities for future action has	___	___	___	___	___
8. take risks for a desired plan of action has	___	___	___	___	___
9. judge my life experiences has	___	___	___	___	___
10. define my skills has	___	___	___	___	___
11. obtain the necessary information about job opportunities has	___	___	___	___	___
12. relate my skills to others has	___	___	___	___	___
13. follow through on my decisions has	___	___	___	___	___
14. learn about educational opportunities has	___	___	___	___	___
15. set short range and long range goals for myself has	___	___	___	___	___
16. appreciate the need for planning my future has	___	___	___	___	___

Self - inventory page two

Compared to 4 months ago, my ability to:	Improved greatly	Improved somewhat	Not Changed	Declined somewhat	Declined greatly
17. ask for others'help when needed has	___	___	___	___	___
18. feel more confident about my qualities and potential has	___	___	___	___	___
19. suggest alternatives for those who ask advice from me has	___	___	___	___	___
20. determine a satisfying and realistic job to match my abilities has	___	___	___	___	___
21. understand myself has	___	___	___	___	___

Over the next five years what are your dreams for yourself?

Over the next five years what are your education and/or employment goals?

Appendix I (con't)

Final Evaluation Form

FOCUS ON CHOICE

EVALUATION

Please rate your overall opinion of the following ingredients of the Focus On Choice series. If you would like to make any additional comments, please include them on the back of this page.

	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
1. Location of the classes	____	____	____	____	____
2. Time (9:00AM - 12:00PM)	____	____	____	____	____
3. Films	____	____	____	____	____
4. Job Charts	____	____	____	____	____
5. Books					
a) How To Decide	____	____	____	____	____
b) Quick Job Hunting Map	____	____	____	____	____
c) Womanswork Book	____	____	____	____	____
6. Topics covered in class	____	____	____	____	____
7. Group Discussions	____	____	____	____	____
8. Resume Writing	____	____	____	____	____
9. Assertiveness Training	____	____	____	____	____
10. Art Activities	____	____	____	____	____
11. Instructor	____	____	____	____	____
12. Guest Consultants	____	____	____	____	____
13. Sequence of topics	____	____	____	____	____
14. Informal structure	____	____	____	____	____
15. Individual Counseling	____	____	____	____	____
16. Overall Length (13 weeks)	____	____	____	____	____
17. Other Participants	____	____	____	____	____
13. Information about careers	____	____	____	____	____
19. Educational information	____	____	____	____	____
20. Information about community agencies	____	____	____	____	____

"END OF DOCUMENT"